

DARDEN RESTAURANTS INC  
Form DFAN14A  
March 20, 2014

UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549

SCHEDULE 14A  
(Rule 14a-101)

INFORMATION REQUIRED IN PROXY STATEMENT

SCHEDULE 14A INFORMATION

Proxy Statement Pursuant to Section 14(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934  
(Amendment No. )

Filed by the Registrant

Filed by a Party other than the Registrant

Check the appropriate box:

- Preliminary Consent Statement
- Confidential, for Use of the Commission Only (as permitted by Rule 14a-6(e)(2))
- Definitive Consent Statement
- Definitive Additional Materials
- Soliciting Material Under Rule 14a-12

DARDEN RESTAURANTS, INC.

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(Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

STARBOARD VALUE AND OPPORTUNITY MASTER FUND LTD  
STARBOARD VALUE AND OPPORTUNITY S LLC  
STARBOARD VALUE AND OPPORTUNITY C LP  
STARBOARD LEADERS DELTA LLC  
STARBOARD LEADERS FUND LP  
STARBOARD VALUE GP LLC  
STARBOARD PRINCIPAL CO LP  
STARBOARD PRINCIPAL CO GP LLC  
STARBOARD VALUE A LP  
STARBOARD VALUE A GP LLC  
STARBOARD VALUE R LP  
STARBOARD VALUE R GP LLC  
JEFFREY C. SMITH

MARK R. MITCHELL  
PETER A. FELD  
BRADLEY D. BLUM  
CHARLES M. SONSTEBY  
ROBERT MOCK  
CRAIG S. MILLER

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(Name of Persons(s) Filing Proxy Statement, if Other Than the Registrant)

Payment of Filing Fee (Check the appropriate box):

- No fee required.
- Fee computed on table below per Exchange Act Rules 14a-6(i)(1) and 0-11.

Title of each class of securities to which transaction applies:

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Aggregate number of securities to which transaction applies:

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Per unit price or other underlying value of transaction computed pursuant to Exchange Act Rule 0-11 (set forth the amount on which the filing fee is calculated and state how it was determined):

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Proposed maximum aggregate value of transaction:

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Total fee paid:

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Fee paid previously with preliminary materials:

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Check box if any part of the fee is offset as provided by Exchange Act Rule 0-11(a)(2) and identify the filing for which the offsetting fee was paid previously. Identify the previous filing by registration statement number, or the form or schedule and the date of its filing.

Amount previously paid:

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Form, Schedule or Registration Statement No.:

Filing Party:

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Date Filed:

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Starboard Value LP, together with the other participants named herein (collectively, "Starboard"), has made a definitive filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission of a solicitation statement and an accompanying WHITE request card to be used to solicit requests that Darden Restaurants, Inc. (the "Company") call a special meeting of shareholders to approve a non-binding resolution urging the Board of Directors of the Company not to approve any agreement or proposed transaction involving a separation or spin-off of the Company's Red Lobster business prior to the 2014 Annual Meeting of Shareholders unless such agreement or transaction would require shareholder approval.

On March 20, 2014, Starboard Value LP issued an open letter to shareholders of the Company. The full text of the letter is attached hereto as Exhibit 99.1 and is incorporated herein by reference.