

DARDEN RESTAURANTS INC
 Form 4
 January 03, 2005

FORM 4

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

OMB APPROVAL

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STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *
LEE JOE R

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
DARDEN RESTAURANTS INC [DRI]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)
5900 LAKE ELLENOR DRIVE, P.O. BOX 593330
 (Street)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)
12/22/2004

Director 10% Owner
 Officer (give title below) Other (specify below)
Chairman

ORLANDO, FL 32859-3330

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)
 Form filed by One Reporting Person
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

(City) (State) (Zip)

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | Code | V | Amount | (D) | | | |
| Common Stock | 12/22/2004 | | G | V | 300 | D | \$ 0 1,124,179 | D | |
| Common Stock | 12/23/2004 | | G | V | 14,481 | D | \$ 0 1,109,698 | D | |
| Common Stock | 12/27/2004 | | G | V | 6,075 | D | \$ 0 1,103,623 | D | |
| Common Stock | 12/28/2004 | | G | V | 1,950 | D | \$ 0 1,101,673 | D | |
| Common Stock | 12/29/2004 | | G | V | 2,350 | D | \$ 0 1,099,323 | D | |

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Common Stock 1,451.847 ⁽¹⁾ I Savings Plan

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | 7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4) | 8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5) | 9. Number of Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned (Instr. 5) |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|

Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address | Relationships | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|----------|-------|
| | Director | 10% Owner | Officer | Other |
| LEE JOE R 5900 LAKE ELLENOR DRIVE P.O. BOX 593330 ORLANDO, FL 32859-3330 | X | | Chairman | |

Signatures

Douglas E. Wentz, Attorney-in-fact for LEE, JOE R., 5900 Lake Ellenor Drive, P.O. Box 593330, Orlando, FL 32859-3330, Darden Restaurants, Inc. (DRI) 01/03/2005

__Signature of Reporting Person Date

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
 - ** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- The number of shares reported is based on a plan statement dated December 31, 2004 and is derived from an undivided interest in a fund (1) consisting of both Darden common stock and a small cash position that fluctuates from time to time. The number of shares reported may change based on the size of the cash position at the time of reporting.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

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