Darden Restaurants Announces Dividend

ORLANDO, Fla., Mar 26, 2004 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Darden Restaurants, Inc. (NYSE: DRI) announced yesterday the Board of Directors declared a cash dividend of 4 cents per share on the Company's outstanding common stock. The dividend is payable on May 1, 2004 to shareholders of record at the close of business on April 9, 2004. Based on this 4-cent semi-annual dividend declaration, the Company's indicated annual dividend is 8 cents per share.

Darden Restaurants, Inc., headquartered in Orlando, FL, owns and operates over 1,300 Red Lobster, Olive Garden, Bahama Breeze, Smokey Bones and Seasons 52 restaurants with annual sales of $4.7 billion.

Forward-looking statements in this news release, if any, are made under the Safe Harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Certain important factors could cause results to differ materially from those anticipated by the forward-looking statements, including the impact of changing economic or business conditions, the impact of competition, the availability of favorable credit and trade terms, the impact of changes in the cost or availability of food and real estate, government regulation, construction costs, weather conditions and other factors discussed from time to time in reports filed by the Company with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

SOURCE Darden Restaurants, Inc.


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