

Proust Questionnaire



Name: Rahul Donde

Age: 34

Hometown: Mumbai, India.

Current City: Geneva, Switzerland.

Current Employer: Lévy Kaufmann-Kohler.

Education: B.L.S., LL.B. from Government Law College, Mumbai; LL.M. (International Dispute Settlement), from the Graduate Institute, Geneva and the University of Geneva, Geneva; LL.M. (Oil & Gas Law, from the Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen.

How did you get involved in international arbitration? While I was an intern in India, one of the first cases I worked on was an arbitration against a celebrity for breach of contract (he wore the wrong watch at an event). I enjoyed researching issues of separability (the contract was said to be void as the celebrity was a minor), and designing a cost-effective and expeditious process for resolution of the dispute. The experience sparked my interest in international arbitration, and led me to the firm belief that because of its inherent flexibility, arbitration is an ideal dispute resolution mechanism for resolving commercial disputes.

What is your favourite virtue? Honesty.

What are your favourite qualities in another person? Truthfulness, kind-heartedness, humor, wit and efficiency.

What is your chief characteristic? Diligence.

What is your main fault? Too outspoken, this often leads to putting my foot in my mouth!

What is your favourite occupation? Interacting with people from different backgrounds and learning about new cultures. It's a fascinating world!

What is your idea of happiness? An empty beach, piña colada(s), chips and a good book.

What is your idea of misery? Orwell's 1984.

If not yourself, who would you be? Homer Simpson – he has it all!

Where would you like to live? Sydney. Great people, great beaches.

Who is your favourite prose author? Ramchandra Guha (Indian historian and social/political commentator).

Who is your favourite hero/heroine in fiction? The Khaleesi from Game of Thrones. She's been through a lot, and consistently manages to transform adversity into prosperity.

Who is your hero in real life? My parents. They've worked hard to get through tough times, without complaint. They've also made the time to contribute to society, something which I see less and less of these days.

What historical person do you most dislike? I have a long list, with Hitler at the top.

What is your favourite name? Lassie – brings back fond memories of my dog while growing up.

What do you hate the most? Getting partially wet in the rain. Either you go all the way, or you don't!

What is your natural talent? Putting people at ease.

What is your favourite arbitration-related decision? In investment arbitration, Metal-Tech which used “red flags” to come to a finding of corruption. In commercial arbitration, Booz Allen v. SBI in which the Supreme Court of India set the limits of arbitrability in India.

Who is your favourite arbitrator? Someone who pays attention to detail, without losing sight of the bigger picture.

Who is your mentor? Several people have advised me over the years. At the moment, Laurent Lévy and Gabrielle Kaufmann-Kohler provide invaluable guidance and constant encouragement.

What is your motto? Never say never!

What do you hope to contribute to Young ICCA? With my multi-cultural background, I hope to promote and strengthen ties between young practitioners across the globe. The international arbitration market is increasingly competitive, and I would like to focus on the growth and development of younger, less-experienced practitioners ensuring that they are in a position to make the most of the various opportunities available to them. Having benefited myself from the opportunities offered by Young ICCA, by attending, speaking at, and organizing workshops and publishing on the Young ICCA blog, I will fully support Young ICCA's efforts in these areas. Besides, I hope to increase the number of workshops on the “nuts and bolts” of arbitration and promote diversity, so that practitioners across the world have access to arbitration scholarship.