



FISHY: Queen with market trader Pat O'Connor

ROYAL GIFT NOT A LOAD OF OL' TRIPE

BY GERALDINE COMISKEY

It was the Royal salute that nearly didn't happen at all. When nervous honchos saw what the traders in Cork's English Market were putting in the Queen's hamper, they were in a right royal tizzy. And they insisted on removing local delicacies tripe, pigs' feet and drisheen.

But Cork is not called the Rebel County for nothing. Traders decided their drisheen was fit for the Queen. And while the pigs' trotters didn't make it, they managed to sneak in some tripe.

Not even the man who put together the hamper, Rory McCann, knew what was in it as he waited for the Queen and Prince Philip to arrive at the market on Friday.

"We were going to put drisheen, pigs' trotters and tripe in it, because it's traditional Cork food, but Bord Bia got onto us and told us not to include it."

"They didn't give any reason. They just said it wasn't a big seller on the international market and they said the main thing to promote was Irish beef."

TRIPLE

"But they let us include butifalo mozzarella which we've only recently started producing in Cork."

"We told them we were going to put tripe, drisheen and pigs trotters in the hamper, but they said it would be better to stick to that [Bord Bia] list and not add anything in. And there was no drisheen, tripe or pigs' trotters on their list."

Stephanie Mo of Bord Bia was surprised to find that the centrepiece of the hamper did in fact include a packet of drisheen with a bit of tripe on the side, courtesy of butcher AA O'Reilly and Sons, who have been in business since 1910.

Queen Elizabeth didn't bat an eyelid as she came face to face with the cheeky food, which was tastefully arranged



●Geraldine and hamper so it wasn't pointing straight at her.

Nor did she flinch at the freshly-killed pheasants, quail, duck and rabbit hanging out of a pole as she entered the central aisle of the market.

Indeed, the Queen is not squeamish and has been known to eat the odd bit of haggis when she's in Balmoral Castle.

Other non-controversial items in the hamper included porter cake, tea-brack, a side of Irish beef, smoked salmon and eels, apple syrup, Wexford honey, Bandon butter, handmade chocolates and Turkish Delight — made using a Cork recipe!

The Duke lingered a over the hamper, and was clearly gazing in wonder at the tripe and drisheen.

A carton of mussels caught his eye. Then he spotted the Queen's favourite cheese, Milleen and studied the packaging while his wife chatted with Lord Mayor Michael O'Connell and his wife Catherine.