



THE SCULPTED VEGAN

**THE 3 TRIED AND TESTED METHODS TO
GAIN MUSCLE
IN A CALORIE DEFICIT**



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When I first competed in 2017 I weighed in at 63kg at the start of my diet. 14 weeks later, I stood on the scales at 63kg. My coach was confused. Most people who he prepped for a show lost weight on the scale, not maintained it. The only thing he could put it down to was that I had built muscle while losing fat simultaneously. He said he had never seen this before and attributed it to my vegan diet because I was the first vegan competitor he had ever prepped.

However, the next year the exact same thing happened. In fact this year, I was even more shredded standing on stage at about 9% body fat. Yet, when I started my diet I was about 20% body fat and weighed 65 kilos. And at the end of my diet 14 weeks later, I was at 9% body fat and weight 65 kilos. My coach again was astounded. He

couldn't believe that I had lost so much body fat yet maintained the same weight on the scale. Again, the only thing he could put it down to was that I had gained muscle while burning fat. This has happened to me every single time I have competed or dieted. My scale weight never ever goes down and always remains consistent. In the four years since I started bodybuilding I have gained 10 kg of Pure Muscle. That's 22lbs or 5.5lbs of muscle per year, which really is quite astounding

So how can you get the same results as me? Here is my formula for building muscle while on a calorie deficit, or really at any time of year. The only thing I do differently whenever I am dieting is I count calories and add cardio. Other than that, my choice of food remains exactly the same.

When I was younger I used to eat for pleasure. Now, I eat for nutrition. What changed? I think it was when I was 19 or 20 years old and I discovered a book by Dr Andrew Weil called 8 Weeks to Optimum Health. This book completely transformed my understanding of the human body, the food we eat and the supplements we take led me on a lifelong path of gaming to nourish my body at the highest level for optimum performance and health. I stopped craving junk food, stopped eating meat and started reading the back of every food packet that I purchased. I was horrified by all of the unknown ingredients that seemed to be in a lot of the food that I consumed on a daily basis. I also learnt about hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated fats and the horrific way they affect the body and the internal organs. Armed with all this new data, I vowed to transform my relationship with food and see it more as a tool to optimise the way I lived my life and treated my body.



This mindset has carried me through right into my early 40s. It has influenced and shaped everything I have done on every program I have written. I honestly believe the reason that I got such incredible results in a very short space of time when I started bodybuilding was because of how healthy my internal and external body was. I had been practicing yoga for 10 years and running an online detox yoga and nutrition program. My liver was running at full speed, my digestive system was highly efficient and I was suffering from not one single element when I first stepped in the gym. I truly believe with my whole heart, that the reason my body continues to be so vibrantly healthy and my results unsurpassable, is because of the food I choose to eat.

Many people do not know that the liver is the biggest fat burning organ of the body.

If your liver is fatty or overloaded with processing toxins karma it will not do its job of burning fat efficiently. Your liver also protects your immune system and the first thing I advise people to do when they are ill is to go on a liver detox and take liver supplements to support the healthy functioning of this extremely important organ. Food affects your organs and your organs affect how your body processes food and and draws nutrition from it. When you eat food that is nutritionally dense but calorificly light karma your body is able to efficiently extract the nutrition from the food and and feed hungry muscles.



The reason why many people feel unfulfilled and hungry on a daily basis is not because they are not eating enough food, but because **they are not eating food that is adequately nourishing their body on a cellular level.** Whenever you eat food that is filling but is very nutritionally light karma your body will cry out for more food to try to get you to give it what it needs to repair cell tissue and do it work efficiently. I dont really eat anything that is processed, does not come from a whole plant or vegetable, or has as many weird and wonderful ingredients that sound like they belong in a science lab and not on the back of a food packet. Eating this way allows the body to efficiently metabolize the food by breaking it down into smaller components, and then building it back up into to sell tissue. It horrifies me when I see bodybuilders and professional athletes filling up on sugar free jello, sugar free energy drinks and and the most incredible amount of processed crap. No wonder many bodybuilders have a bad reputation for being unhealthy! It's not because the sport is unhealthy or the diet and exercise is unhealthy when leading up to competition, it's because they are choosing to Sacrifice their health for how they look and insist on eating sugar tasting food which is damaging their health. We are a nation of sugar addicts. I don't think a spoonful of jello has passed my lips in the last 35 years. I have never had a sugar free energy drink in my entire life. When I'm thirsty, I drink water and if I want to leave it a squeeze in the juice of half a lemon. My body truly is my temple and I 100% believe that the reason my results are so phenomenal is because of this belief.

Here are my top tips for gaining muscle on a calorie deficit

1. Eat whole, nutritious, plant based food

Although I do eat protein powder, tofu, seitan and other vegan meats, I tried to make these as high quality and pure as possible. The bulk of my food comes from vegetables, beans, legumes, lentils, seeds, grains and fruit. When I eat carbohydrates I try to ensure that it is a whole food carbohydrates such as oats, quinoa or sweet potato. I do eat rice regularly, even when dieting but I use this as fuel for my muscles after training.

- Avoid sugar free and low fat food

When you are thirsty, drink water. If you would like to flavour your water squeeze in the juice of a lime or lemon. Avoid drinking diet soda or energy drinks at all costs. These drinks leech minerals from your tissues and bones to neutralize the acidity of the drink. So not only do they give absolutely nothing to your body, they actually take from it leaving it in a negative nutritional balance. There is also a lot of research to suggest that aspartame is extremely dangerous for the body. Stay away also from sugar free candy, jello and sweets. They are empty of calories and empty of nutrition. The only thing they do is satisfy a sweet craving and give nothing to your body nutritionally.

- Time your nutrition around your training

One of the most important things you can do to feed your muscles is to time your nutrition around your training. Many people ask me if they should train fasted to burn more fat, and the answer is always no! The gym is for building muscle. You must feed your muscles with glycogen before you train so that you have power and energy to lift the weights. Your goal in the gym is never to burn fat, it is to build or keep muscle. Whenever you eat a carbohydrate-rich food directly before training and after training, the carbohydrates are quickly converted to glycogen and fed into the muscles when they most need them. Never deprive your muscles of what they need to build and grow.

- Prioritise plant protein

Plant protein is very easily digested. When protein is easily digested, it is metabolized faster and fed into the muscles and tissues more quickly. Animal protein is very acidic and takes a long time to digest. Humans have the digestive tract of a herbivore because it is very long. If a tiger was to eat your foot whole, it would be digested in 2-hours. That's how strong the stomach acid is in a tiger. The human body could not eat or digest a whole foot. because meat (and bone!) takes a long time to digest, It also stays in the digestive tract a lot longer. In my experience, this can slow down digestion. When your digestion is slow, the body does not eliminate the food as quickly, which can cause a reabsorption of toxins back into the system. The liver also dumps toxins, cholesterol and excess hormones into the digestive system via the bile.

If food stays in your digestive system for longer than necessary, the toxins cholesterol and hormones can be reabsorbed back into the system and sent back to the liver again for processing. This over works the liver and makes it work harder than it needs to.

- Drink green juices daily

Green juices are something that I drink almost daily. When dieting especially I like to ensure my body is nourished on a cellular level and green juices hit the spot for this. They are packed with iron, antioxidants, nutrients and phytonutrients to nourish the body and keep it healthy.

My favourite green juice recipe is as follows:

- 100g spinach
- 1 apple
- 1 carrot
- 1 lemon
- 100g cilantro/coriander
- 2 stems celery
- ½ cucumber
- 1 thumb fresh ginger

Juice in a juicer (not blender as you want the fibre removed) and drink immediately. Fruit and veg start to oxidise immediately and lose 50% of their nutrients within a few hours. You can batch make juice and freeze portions, drinking as soon as defrosted, if you need to save time.



2. Eat at least 5 or 6 times per day

There is nothing worse than feeling hungry. It makes you irritable and miserable. One of the ways I have been able to diet successfully is by eating 5-6 times a day. Two or three of these meals are protein shakes, which we count as meals. And not all of them are big meals. But by structuring your day so that you are eating every 2-3 hours, it means that when you feel hungry, it's time for your next meal. Eating 5-6 times a day also allows a continuous stream of nutrients to enter the bloodstream, meaning that muscles are fed, tissues are repaired and your digestion stays healthy and efficient.

- Eat 30g protein within 30 mins of waking up

To find out why this one tip is crucial to your fat loss success, [click here](#).



- Eat a protein rich meal before bed

Muscles repair when you are sleeping and so benefit from a stream of nutrients while you rest. Muscles are not made in the gym, they are made while you sleep. The gym tears apart muscle fibres and sleep builds and restores them. I like to ensure that I always eat before bed. When not dieting, this is usually a meal rich in both carbs and protein. However, when dieting and carbs are lower, I save them for before and after training and instead eat protein before bed. This is usually just a protein shake, sometimes consisting of only protein powder blended with ice and water. But a nice chocolate protein shake before bed, made thick like an ice cream, not only satisfies the sweet craving you usually get in the evening, but ensures you sleep well as you are not hungry. Going to be hungry is the worst thing you can do as ghrelin levels rise (the hunger hormone) and stop you from sleeping restfully. Worried that you might be consuming too much protein by eating this way? [Click here to understand](#) why it's total BS that your body can only absorb 30g protein in one sitting.

- Keep supplements exactly the same

My supplement schedule never changes from season to season, apart from perhaps adding in the occasional fat burner such as caffeine or CLA. I still take my daily amounts of L Leucine, creatine and L Glutamine as well as my health supporting supplements. Sometimes I will add in liver supporting supplements such as Liver Tonic by Herb Pharm, or Stress Support, also by Herb Pharm which supports the adrenal glands.

The health supplements I take all year round are:

- Vitamin C
- Vitamin B Complex
- Magnesium
- Liquid Trace Minerals
- Flax oil
- Kelp (for thyroid)

If you want to get a full breakdown of the supplements I take all year round, [click here](#).



3. Keep training intensity high

- Cardio is for fat loss and strength training is for muscle building

The gym is for building and maintaining muscle and cardio is for fat loss. Do not confuse the two. You are not going into the gym when dieting to lose body fat, you are going in there to work hard to build and maintain muscle. On my 12 week shred program, I designed it so that the cardio and weights were done in one session, to save time. However, this program is not designed to be an athlete style shred for competition, it's

designed for someone who perhaps hasn't been weight training for a long time, and just wants to build some muscle and lose body fat. In this case, it's perfectly acceptable to do HIIT style sessions in between your strength sets. But if you have been concentrating on building muscle for a long time (like me) and then embark on a shred, it's best NOT to do this HIIT style of training between your sets as you will probably have to drop back on weights and your body may drop muscle tissue if you do this for 12 week straight. If you've been concentrating on building muscle for a long time, perhaps through my 18 Month Sculpt & Shred Program, then it's best to do cardio separately and keep it slow and steady.

- What builds the muscle, keeps the muscle

It always surprises me that athletes change their training schedule when dieting for a show, rather than keeping it the same intensity and pace as before. My trainer Mark Getty has always taught me that "What builds the muscle, keeps the muscle". In order to keep the muscle you have (and build more in a deficit) you need to keep your training intensity at exactly the same level that it was before you started dieting. This is because the body does not want to keep muscle as it is very calorie hungry and not needed for anything other than moving the body around. Many people when they start dieting, switch from heavy weights at lower reps in the 8-12 rep range, to higher rep ranges and lower weights. This is counter productive for one main reason.

If you build enough muscle to squat 100kg, and you stop squatting 100kg, then your body will drop the muscle that you don't need anymore. Your body does not want to keep enough muscle to squat 100kg if indeed, you are no longer squatting this weight. So if you drop back to 60kg for 15-20 reps, then your body will drop muscle to accommodate the lower weight. This is why people lose muscle in a calorie deficit! If you never change your training protocol, your body has no need to lose muscle and indeed, will keep building it if you follow the principles in this guide.

If you would like to know more about how you should be training to build muscle quickly, [click here](#).

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