

# *Super Lean Strategies*

LEAN, GREEN, AND MARINE



*Transcript of Audio Interview  
Scott Tousignant & Tom Venuto*

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**Scott Tousignant:** Hello. Welcome to Unstoppable Fat Loss. This is Scott Tousignant. Today I am joined by my fitness role model and fat loss expert Tom Venuto, author of [Burn the Fat Feed the Muscle](#) and creator of the [Burn the Fat Inner Circle](#). Welcome to the call, Tom.

**Tom Venuto:** Thanks, Scott. Always a pleasure.

**Scott Tousignant:** It's great to have you on board. Basically, in this interview we're going to skip all the fluff and filler and we'll get right to the super lean strategies that you've used in the past to achieve below 4 percent body fat.

Let's first start off with nutrition. Tom, what's your number one strategy, let's say for the person who wants to take their fat loss to the next level to become super lean with six pack abs and incredible definition all over?

Let's assume that they're eating five to six meals a day, they're consuming natural foods that we recommend from all the different food groups, and they're even allowing themselves two free meals per week. Do you have a number one strategy to help this person really take it to the next level?

**Tom Venuto:** Scott, the number one strategy is to get your calories right and make sure you're in a calorie deficit. It's the least glamorous strategy, but you can't lose fat if you're in a calorie surplus. It doesn't matter what foods you eat.

You can get some advantages by reducing carbs, but you could theoretically be on zero carbs and if you eat too much you're not going to lose fat. That means either, controlling your portion sizes meticulously, working off a menu that's been created at the right calorie level for you or actually counting calories by keeping a journal every day for a period of time.

Whenever I start talking about calories people have a tendency to tune out, because they want something new or some secret cutting edge strategy. If there any so called secret strategy we can take this calorie topic to another level and call it the **selective reduction of calories**. What I mean is that you need to reduce calories to have a deficit to lose fat.

So, the next question is which calories do you cut? Do you just reduce portions of everything across the board evenly? That is one option, and yes that will work. But, will something work better? I think so. I think **you should look at your nutrition the way you look at a financial budget**. You have to budget your calories.

If you agree that you must have a deficit to lose fat, that's like only having so much money to spend. If you only have so many calories to spend you better spend them wisely. So, if you have a small budget you have to get every nutrient you need first, you've got to get the essentials in first.

What you do is you selectively cut out the most calorie dense nutrient source first. You could have a candy bar and still lose fat if you keep a deficit, but you've delivered nothing but empty calories, no nutrients. At the same time you've pushed out nutrients that you could have put in its place. It's like wasting your money when your finances are tight; you've wasted your calories.

Also, what we want to do is **cut out the foods that you're most likely to overeat and not realize**. What we do is we leave the foods in your diet that make you feel fuller on less food. **If we leave foods in your diet that have a higher thermogenic affect that gives you an advantage in fat loss.**

Specifically, what you want to cut out first is calorie dense simple sugars, starches, and grains, especially the refined and the processed ones. A couple examples of those are pasta and box cereal. Even though these starches and whole grains appear on the food pyramid they're really easy to overeat.

So, even though they may not necessarily be bad, when you're on a calorie budget you've got to look at them as a luxury. When times are tight, as in with low calories, you've got to dispense with the luxuries.

**Leave in the nutrient dense, nutrient rich, low calorie foods.** Green veggies, salad veggies, fiberous carbs, and we can leave in for the most part the fruit, because it's almost impossible to overeat broccoli, asparagus, green beans. A few hundred calories worth of those kinds of foods is a mountain of food. It's really easy to over eat pasta. You could down 1,000 calories easily in one sitting without even flinching.

The other food group you're going to leave alone is the lean protein, because lean protein has a high thermogenic effect of about 25 to 30 percent. That means that up to 25 or 30 calories out of 100 calories of protein is used just to digest the protein, so you're left with a net of 70 usable calories. Also, lean protein has the highest impact on controlling appetite and making you feel fuller.

**Fiberous carbs are also good for making you feel fuller, and that's your green veggies and high fiber vegetables.** Those are the ones with a high water and a high fiber content. What we did is we reduced our carbs, but by reducing carbs we didn't save anything magical by reducing carbs, we selectively reduced our calories is what we've done.

**What we've left is lean and green**, that's what I call it. Lean protein, green veggies, and then the only thing left we have to pay attention to is the other essential nutrient of essential fats. You get them from fatty fish like salmon, flaxseed oil or other nuts and seeds. **One of the primary sources is fatty fish, like salmon, so I call that marine. So, what we have in a maximum fat loss diet lean, green, and marine.**

**Scott Tousignant:** I will never forget that, Tom. That is awesome. That's exactly what we're trying to do here is embed it in people's mind with something simple. Really this isn't a secret when it comes to calories, it's just a matter of being smart with our selection.

I think deep down inside most people really know what they're supposed to do and what they're supposed to eat. **The real key point here is these nutrient dense, nutrient rich foods are the ones that satisfy us the most.**

Let's move on to the fitness component of being super lean. Do you personally have a favorite fat burning workout program that you use when you want to go from lean to super lean in your quest for around 4 percent body fat or even less just under it? Do you have a favorite workout program that you tend to go on?

**Tom Venuto:** I have a personal favorite, for sure. One thing I should point out is that it's a little bit different from my favorite workout for other people. I think that's a pretty important distinction, because **a lot of people are confused about what type of workout program to go on these days. There's so many choices.**

Right now what's really popular is using weight training to burn fat. What's usually involved is picking exercises that involve large muscle mass. Compound exercises, squats, lunges, dead lifts, rows, presses, core activation exercises, and even some exercises that are not traditional body building exercises, but they're like hybrid movements. For example, a squat thruster with dumbbells where when you stand up from the squat you press the dumbbells overhead, so it's like two exercises in one.

**What this does is it burns a lot of calories. It's actually cardiovascular in nature, it stimulates your metabolism.** Also, what you might do with these types of workouts is **cut the rest intervals down.** You may put together the exercises in super sets or even circuit training.

Some people are even passing on the weight training and they're doing body weight resistance training. Sometimes even that's in circuits. That's what's popular now. **It's time**

**efficient; it's a good way for the average person, the average busy housewife, executive, or student to train for fat loss.**

It's also pretty popular with the general public, because these workouts aren't really designed to build a bodybuilder physique or pack on muscle mass. They develop what I guess in the popular vernacular is muscle tone, and they help you get leaner at the same time.

Now, I mentioned this first to put in perspective the way I train. You asked me what's my favorite workout to get down to 4 percent body fat. I have a little different situation. I'm going from lean to super lean, essentially. I'm a bodybuilder, so **I don't use weight training to burn fat, not directly. Any fat burning effect I get from my weight training to me is secondary, at least in the way I approach it mentally.**

When I'm lifting weights, burning fat is pretty much the furthest thing from my mind. What's totally dominating my mind is developing the muscle. So, as a bodybuilder **I use weight training to build and maintain muscle and to strategically put the muscle in the right places, right where I need it so I have a symmetrical physique.**

**The way I do that is with a split routine, which is the traditional way that bodybuilders train where I might do only two or three body parts per workout with higher volume.**

Now, those circuit and fat burning weight training programs are great for a lot of people, but one problem is there is a compromise. **The more you turn your weight training into cardio by doing it in a circuit fashion or by decreasing the weights a lot and cutting down the rest intervals, the less effective it gets for building muscle mass and for building strength.**

You've got to get really clear about your goals. My goals are strength and muscle mass. So, the circuit training and the fat burning weight training would not be a good choice for fat burning workout for me. **So, how do I lose fat? I do it with nutrition and calorie control, and my workout for burning fat is cardio.**

What I do is personally I prefer to do my cardio on cardio equipment in the gym. Not that it's necessarily better than doing something outside or doing a class, it's just me personal choice. I use a Stairmaster or Stairmaster step mill, sometimes a Lifecycle bike, occasionally I do a really fast walk on the treadmill.

Most of the year I keep my cardio to a minimum. Usually my maintenance workout is three days a week for 20 to 30 minutes, and that's just my year round routine. What I do different when I want maximum fat loss is I start doing cardio almost every day, six or seven days a week.

**Most of it is steady state, but not low in intensity. It's moderate intensity, sometimes even high intensity, at least as high as I can go and maintain it for at least 30 minutes.** Unless I'm mentally or physically dragging on a particular day I push myself.

**I've also always done some kind of high intensity cardio or interval training.** Usually one, two, or three days a week. Years ago, back before it became really popular I ran hills and I ran stadium steps. Back then I didn't even call it interval training, and I honestly didn't even consider it fat loss training. I know it's great for fat loss, but I always considered it a great extra for my leg workout. My legs were always a strong point, and I think that's an extra plus that you get from that type of training.

Those were short workouts. The local university stadium had a long straight up flight. I would run up and walk down anywhere from 10 to 15 times when I was in good shape. Today I still hit two or three interval workouts a week. I do them on the bike or the Stairmaster, because I don't have access to hills or a straight up flight of steps anymore without traveling.

**My interval training is usually 20 to 30 minutes. I usually set it up alternating between one minutes sprints and one minute recovery intervals, and I usually go eight to 12 rounds like that.**

When I get to the tail end of my contest prep I'm getting really lean and depleted, I usually back off the high intensity stuff, because I'm more concerned about maintaining the lean mass. For the majority of the three or four months that I'm getting ready for a competition, if I'm going for super lean it's cardio almost every day. About half the workouts are steady state, about half are interval.

**The last thing I point out that's really important is that all my cardio is done with progression. Some people have this idea that cardio is just this mind numbing repetition of the same workout over and over again. If I didn't get lean enough in the previous seven days, then I have one focus and that is over the next week to burn more calories.**

**So, I crank up the cardio harder, longer, or more often and I just balance that with reducing calories, go at it for another week, measure the results, repeat the process until I reach my goal. When you have a feedback system with progression, it's fool proof. It never fails.**

**Scott Tousignant:** That's an excellent point, because again, with a lot of the fat loss information and fat loss workouts that we're seeing out there, the popular programs, a lot of them are using an example of the person who is on the treadmill every single day for an entire year and look at their body, they haven't

changed it at all. It's not that the long duration cardio isn't working, it's just that they're not progressing.

**Tom Venuto:** Yes.

**Scott Tousignant:** They're not either increasing their intensity, increasing their duration or distance. There's three components that they can manipulate there and they're just continuing to do the same thing over and over. It's not that long duration is bad, it's just that they're not progressing.

**Tom Venuto:** Yes, very important point.

**Scott Tousignant:** Excellent, Tom. I love the point you were talking about muscle building as basically sculpting your body. I was just watching Pumping Iron this morning; my 6 year old son got a kick out of it. One of the first lines in the movie, when you see Arnold in the gym, that's basically what he said. It's like being a sculptor. A sculptor might chisel something away, but working out and weight training is like you're slapping on that clay in the places that you want it.

**Tom Venuto:** Exactly.

**Scott Tousignant:** I really love that mindset of treating the workouts that way and using the cardio like we talked about, combined with nutrition for fat loss.

Let's tap into that since I just mentioned mindset. Is there a difference in your mental toughness when you set out on a 12 week journey to achieve this super lean body compared to your mental approach throughout the remainder of the year when you're just your typical lean self? Can you share one specific strategy that the listener can apply right now to take their mental approach to the next level?

**Tom Venuto:** Yes. The difference is like night and day. It's like the difference between competing in the Olympics and tossing a ball around with your buddies in your backyard. A little pickup game in your backyard you might work up a sweat, but it's casual. There's no big ritual or practice session or mental preparation or strategy. You just grab the ball, walk outside, and go play without a big drama.



**That's what your mental approach to a bodybuilding or fitness program should be like most of the year. It's lifestyle, you just go out and do it, it's part of your daily habits. It can even be fun.**

But, when there's an event, when you've got, for example, a 12 week goal to get super lean to do a photo shoot, to do a competition, something of that magnitude and there's deadline and when that event is important to you and something is at stake you look at it all differently.

You start to take preparation and planning really seriously. Would you take four years of your life to train for the Olympics without any planning or preparation? It would be absurd, right? It's a once in a lifetime opportunity, it defines your life. Every detail would be planned. You'd probably have several coaches, not just one. No stone would be left unturned. You'd take it really seriously.

**I approach my bodybuilding competitions mentally like my own personal Olympics.** Every contest is an important event. **It's a real event, there's real rewards, there's real consequences. You have leverage on yourself, there's people watching you.** You could make a fool out of yourself if you get up on stage and you don't prepare properly. So, it has built in motivation, and its external motivation.

**Whereas, if you just set a personal goal, but it doesn't have external motivation, external accountability factors built into it you've got to be really self motivated. Not many of us are that self motivated.** I don't think anybody can maintain total internal self motivation 100 percent of the time forever. Everybody feels these peaks and valleys at times.

I'll be honest. I've never achieved the condition that I achieve on a bodybuilding competition without the bodybuilding competition. **The competition is the reason I look like that. I have a sport, I have an arena to play in, I have a stage to stand on. When I'm on a stage I have to perform, so it's built in motivation.**

It reminds me of a book. There was the book written back in the 1960's, The Mastery Game by Robert Deropp. It was kind of a 60's psychedelic thing, but right there on the first page was something really powerful that I always remembered. He said, **"Above everything else find a game that's worth playing."**

**When you find it play it with intensity. If life doesn't seem to give you a game, then you have to invent one, because any game is better than no game.** I think that fitness and training with goals and purpose, I think that itself is a game. But, if you put it into a more structured and formal context that can give you all the motivation you need.

My one strategy would be **schedule the timing of your goal to get super lean with an event. Invent your own event if you have to, because most people are not going to get a phone call from Muscle and Fitness or Oxygen magazine saying, “Hey, we want you on the cover in eight weeks.” That would definitely motivate you.**

Most people aren't going to get a call from a movie producer that says, “Hey, we want you to play the next action hero in our next movie. By the way, you're going to be in a skin tight outfit.” Most people aren't going to even win a spot in The Biggest Loser. Most people are not going to compete in bodybuilding.

You have to create a game, or create an event if you're not invited to one or if there's not one immediately available to you. For example, there's lots of opportunities, people get married. Do you want to be in the best shape of your life for the wedding and the honeymoon? Of course. That's an event.

Do you have a 10, 15 or 20 year reunion coming up? There's an event. You've got a vacation coming up, there's an event. You've got a cruise and you want to look good. There's an event. Some people who never thought they would do it, they might just toy around with the idea of doing a bodybuilding or a figure competition.

Ladies should listen up, because figure is exploding in popularity right now. Most women who don't like the look of female bodybuilders, they do like the look of figure competitors. It's really going main stream. Valerie Waugaman and Beth Horn were just on Donny Deutsch, The Big Idea this past week. They're the new American Gladiators, and they're figure competitors. It's main steam, people like the look.

If you don't want to go that far, if you don't want to go on stage, that's understandable. But, at least sign up for one of these before and after competitions. They're everywhere. **You could do this. Hire a photographer. Have them shoot some before photos. Then schedule a date about 12 weeks from now, pay them in advance for the second shoot and tell them to keep the money if you don't show up.**

**Now you just invented an event, train for your own photo shoot. No one has to see the photos, but at least you invented an event and there's something at stake. If you want more leverage, get on a blog and write about what you're doing and post your photos.**

If you find a game, a sport, an event where there's some real rewards, there's real consequences, there's accountability, you've got leverage on yourself. Just being fully engaged in that it might be the only mental toughness strategy you need, because it's just built in.

**Scott Tousignant:** I love it. A lot of people preach the lifestyle approach out there, which I think is great for most of the year, but we should still plan at least once a year, maybe twice a year an event like this. Very cool!

Tom, I really appreciate you taking the time out of your busy schedule to deliver these top three strategies that we've gone through here. I definitely, like every time we talk I learn something from you. I'm sure the people listening to this call have gathered a lot of information. It's just a matter of taking this information and applying it to their every day lives right now.

For the people listening, to learn more about Tom and his incredible programs, and one great way to hold themselves accountable and to set dates, deadlines, and events is within your [Burn the Fat Inner Circle](#).

Be sure to check out Tom's Burn the Fat Inner Circle. Hold yourself accountable, build support and go after the best physique that you can possibly achieve.

Once again, thanks a lot, Tom. I really appreciate it. Have yourself an awesome day.

**Tom Venuto:** Thanks, Scott.

\*\*\*\*\***End of Transcript**\*\*\*\*\*

Hey! Scott here! That was some pretty powerful stuff, wasn't it?

Tom's a great guy, but the knowledge he has of diet and fitness is absolutely amazing! I urge you to learn from him as much as you can, if you really want to be successful with your fat loss goals. I personally have learned a ton from Tom (he is actually one of my idols in the industry) and continue to do so every time we chat.



If you are ready to take your physique to the next level and sculpt it into an absolute work of art, you definitely need to check out the line up of [Metabolic Masterpiece Body Sculpting Programs](#).

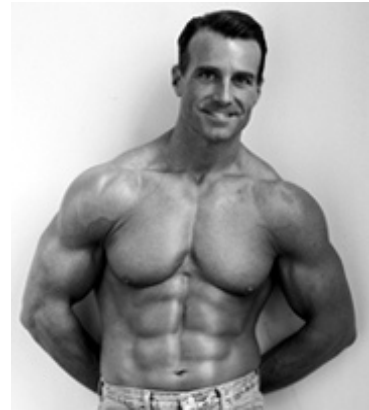
The Metabolic Masterpiece workouts are inspired by Classic Physique Artists. The men and women who have sculpted the best looking physiques for over half a century!

## Who Is Tom Venuto?

**Tom Venuto** is a natural bodybuilder, fat loss expert, freelance writer and best-selling author.

Since 1989, Venuto has been involved in virtually every aspect of the fitness and weight loss industry - as a personal trainer, nutrition consultant, motivation coach, fitness model, health club manager and author / writer.

Tom is a freelance fitness writer whose popular articles on nutrition, training, fat loss and fitness motivation can be found on hundreds of websites worldwide including Bodybuilding.com, About.com, Lee Labrada's Lean Body Coaching Club, Christian Finn's Facts About Fitness.com, Will Brink's Bodybuilding Revealed.com and too many others to list.



Tom has been featured in bodybuilding and fitness magazines including IRONMAN magazine (US, Italian and Australian editions), Natural Bodybuilding, Muscular Development, Exercise for Men, Men's Exercise and Men's Fitness.

Tom has appeared in the mainstream press including Oprah magazine, First for Women magazine, Experience Life magazine, The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times. He has also been a guest on dozens of radio shows including Martha Stewart healthy living (Sirius), WCBS-AM, 1250-ESPN and BlogTalk Radio.

*"Offering the opposite of a quick fix, Venuto is honest about the effort it takes to drop a significant number of pounds." - Polly Brewster, Oprah Magazine.*

Tom holds a bachelor of science degree in Adult Health/Fitness (Exercise Science) from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania and was recently honored to appear in the University's Alumni magazine honoring his writing and publishing achievements. He is a member of the International Society for Sports Nutrition (ISSN), the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), the National Strength And Conditioning Association (NSCA) and all of the weight loss research societies.

Venuto is a competitive bodybuilder and has competed 28 times. His titles include the Mr. Natural New Jersey, Natural Pennsylvania, Natural New York State, Natural Mid Atlantic States and NPC Natural Eastern Classic championships. Tom has also won 2nd place in the Mr. Natural USA and 2nd in the Mr. Natural North America contests sponsored by the ANPPC.

Tom is the founder and CEO of [The Burn The Fat Inner Circle](#) and author of the best-selling e-book, [Burn The Fat, Feed The Muscle](#).

Tom Lives in Hoboken, New Jersey (near New York City). He trains at Strong & Shapely Gym in East Rutherford New Jersey and at Club KO in Hoboken, NJ.

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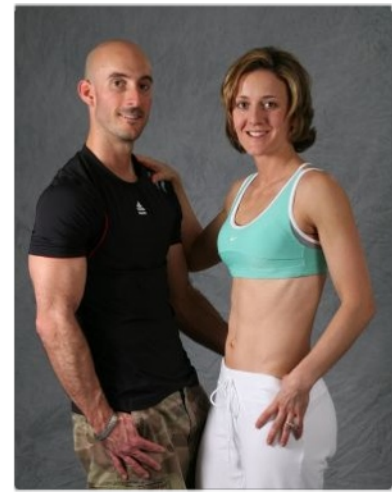
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The [Fat Loss Quickie YouTube Channel](#) is constantly being updated with top notch fitness tips, video demonstrations, recipes, and motivation strategies. Be sure to subscribe to our YouTube Channel updates.